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## Message from the Mayor

Finally, we've rounded third and we're headed for home. Last week, I submitted a revised lease for a new ballpark in Southeast to the DC Council – one that ensures that residential District taxpayers won't pay a penny for the new South Capitol Street ballpark. The revised plan includes a cap on ballpark construction costs, a new baseball academy for District young people and more private funding.

The lease was accompanied by an unprecedented and highly detailed letter, signed by former Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer, who worked as a mediator last month to break the baseball impasse. The letter – signed by Archer, myself, the DC Sports and Entertainment Commission and Major League Baseball (MLB) President Bob DuPuy – sums up the progress made to date, and lays out the new provisions added to assure District residents that the package is a good one.

This package was hard-fought but worth it, because we've addressed and answered every possible concern District residents could have with the baseball agreement. We forced Major League Baseball to come up with additional concessions, we leveraged millions of dollars in new developer money from the private sector and we made headway in talks with the White House about helping to pay for needed Metro upgrades in Southeast. Most importantly, we agreed to put into place a construction cost cap, which ensures that regardless of outside factors, the ballpark will be built for a set amount.

I'm grateful to Chairman Linda Cropp for her steady support of the stadium project and her hard work to win the support of a majority of her colleagues for the plan. I look forward to a speedy vote by the full Council so that we can break ground on the new ballpark this spring and bring the city a step closer to a new home for the Nationals. In years to come, we will look back at this deal as a watershed event for the city, a positive step forward that will pay dividends to District residents for generations to come.

The new provisions include:

- A cap on the total construction costs of the ballpark will be put into place and approved by the Council.
- Residents will not be taxed to pay for the ballpark.
- The District may use property on the ballpark site for private development.
- MLB agrees to help create a new youth baseball academy with a \$3.5 million contribution.
- MLB agrees to increase the number of free tickets given to DC youth from 8,000 to 10,000 per year.
- MLB agrees to hold a meeting in the District of all team owners before the summer of 2008.
- Players will make a minimum of 50 youth, educational or charitable appearances a year in the District.

For more information about baseball in the District, please visit our city government home page at [dc.gov](http://dc.gov).



## Kickoff for FY 2006 Tax Filing Season

This is a reminder to District residents that to get through tax season, we're offering free tax preparation assistance at our walk-in service center located on the first floor of 941 North Capitol Street, NE – and as we approach the filing deadline, we will offer extended service hours. In addition, DC is one of a handful of jurisdictions that offer free online tax filing services. We also have trained staff who can help District residents by phone – just call (202) 727-4TAX.

We're trying to make filing your taxes as easy as possible. At any time, you can log onto the Taxpayer Service Center via the District's home page at [dc.gov](http://dc.gov). I also encourage taxpayers who qualify to file for the DC Earned Income Tax Credit.

## Creating a New Vision for Our Libraries

I've been passionate about libraries for a long time. In the fall of 2004, I launched the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of the DC Public Library System, and the task force is holding a series of "Listening Sessions" at District public libraries in every Ward and at the Martin Luther King Jr. Library near Gallery Place.

The bottom line is that we must re-establish every library in our city as a vibrant cultural institution. Our system has major challenges. The average age of our library buildings is 47 years. Circulation and attendance are among the lowest in the nation. Our library system is ill-equipped to address the issues of our adult illiteracy rate, which is 37 percent, and our high-school drop-out rate, which is 41 percent.

The Task Force is seeking citizen views on their recommendations of what it will take to transform the library system into one that is state-of-the-art and delivers services that reflect the needs of the community in facilities that are safe, inviting and high-tech. Once the sessions are concluded, the Task Force will incorporate the responses of residents into its final Task Force report.

I'm confident that these ward-by-ward meetings will gather important input as we work toward a comprehensive plan for a complete revision of the library system. The citizens of the District deserve a state-of-the-art library system and this process will get us there.

During the Listening Sessions, residents will discuss the Task Force recommendations and share their ideas on transforming the District's public libraries into a system that serves their needs. The sessions will last 90 minutes and will include a review of the Task Force recommendations, a DVD presentation on libraries and a group discussion.

For a complete schedule of Listening Sessions to be held at neighborhood libraries please visit [dclibrary.org](http://dclibrary.org).

## Unveiling the Adams Morgan Heritage Trail

Last Saturday, I formally unveiled the newest addition to our city's heritage trails. The trail, "Roads to Diversity: Adams Morgan Heritage Trail," is the fifth in a citywide system of self-guided neighborhood walking trails. [Cultural Tourism DC](#), which designed the trail, also used the occasion to announce plans for a new outreach program to the District's Latino communities.

There are 18 attractive, poster-sized street signs along the trail. The permanent panels combine storytelling and photography, and come with a free English- or Spanish-language guide. Cultural Tourism DC worked with the Adams Morgan community – along with our District Department of Transportation, and our Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, to make the trail possible.

It's a great example of how partnerships can reap real benefits for our city. Adams Morgan has long been known as a nighttime destination. But it's much more than that. It's a neighborhood with a rich history, as the heritage trail explains. Heritage trails have a significant impact in their communities: they contribute to civic pride. They help locals and visitors orient themselves. And they support economic development. Trail followers are encouraged to proceed at their own pace, patronizing nearby restaurants, cafes, and stores.

The following Neighborhood Heritage Trails are already in place:

- Civil War to Civil Rights: Downtown Heritage Trail
- City Within a City: Greater U Street Heritage Trail
- Tour of Duty: Barracks Row Heritage Trail
- River Farms to Urban Towers: Southwest Heritage Trail

I'm proud that we're currently planning Heritage Trails in Shaw and Mount Pleasant.

In other neighborhood news, in response to a recent spate of crime in Adams Morgan, our Metropolitan Police Department's Third District is committing additional officers to the area during closing time for bars. We'll have nearly 20 officers in the area on weekend nights.

The recent attacks have primarily been crimes of opportunity. Some victims have been very intoxicated. Please, be responsible and look out for each other on nights out. Our MPD is working closely with the new Adams Morgan Business Improvement District on longer-term safety improvements.



BRC Alerts

DCLMPC Partnership  
Works!

DCOA Spotlight on Aging

DHS Outreach

DISB DC Financial  
Gateway Express

OAG Inter Alia...

OAPIA Updates

OPGD Grant Funding  
Alerts

# New Office of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Affairs

On January 30, I was pleased to sign legislation establishing the Mayor's Office of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Affairs (GLBT). It was an important occasion for all citizens of the District of Columbia. The bill signifies that we are expanding the diversity of my administration to reflect the diversity of our great city.

I established this office by Mayor's Order in 2004 to provide direction, guidance and support to the Mayor's Office and the DC Council on various issues affecting the GLBT community. By establishing the office in law, we are recognizing the importance of this vital community to the fabric of our city.

It wouldn't be appropriate to talk about the establishment of this office without talking about Wanda Alston who worked tirelessly as my liaison to the GLBT community. She was taken from our lives too early last year. It was in her name that I signed the bill on Monday.

We're raising the stakes here in the Nation's Capital by establishing a cabinet level office to address the concerns of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender citizens. The Office of GLBT Affairs will also serve as a liaison from the Mayor's Office to the GLBT community, government agencies, DC Council, and District's residents.

Joining me at the ceremony where I signed the legislation were Councilmembers Vincent Orange and Jim Graham, Darlene Nipper who will be the director of the new office, and members of the GLBT community.

## Mentor Recognition Day

It's incredibly important that we help the youth of our city strive for a better tomorrow. That's why I was pleased to designate January 25 as Mentor Recognition Day in the District of Columbia.

During my weekly press briefing on that day, I presented a proclamation to Mentors, Inc for providing mentors to nearly 4,000 students in the District of Columbia's public high schools over the past 19 years. There is a tremendous amount of power in mentoring. It is a highly effective strategy that can address many problems facing youths such as school violence, drug abuse and school drop out rates.

Mentoring provides information, opportunities, nurture, and support. By successfully navigating a relationship with a mentor, a young person develops a shared sense of caring, respect, trust, and, consequently, a positive, "I can do anything" attitude.

Mentors had a significant impact on my life personally, academically and professionally. I owe my success in part to mentors who kept me out of trouble and focused on my goals. Our young people need the support of caring, nonjudgmental adults who can help them explore careers, college and other life possibilities that they may never discover otherwise.

Mentored young people have better attendance in school and a better chance of going on to higher education. Mentors, Inc. and its volunteers strive to ensure that every student who enters the program graduates from high school and goes on to higher education or family-sustaining employment.

For more information about Mentors Inc. please visit [mentorsinc.org](http://mentorsinc.org) or call (202) 783-2310.

## Key to the City Presented to Leonard Slatkin

I was proud last week to present National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) Music Director Leonard Slatkin with the key to the city of Washington, DC.

It was truly an honor to give the key to the city to Leonard Slatkin. Throughout his decade with the NSO here in Washington, he has demonstrated an exceptional commitment to arts education and to reaching diverse audiences, using his leadership position at the NSO to teach young people about the importance of music and the arts. He has enriched the cultural heritage of the Nation's Capital and enhanced our reputation as a city overflowing with excellent artistic performances.

Leonard Slatkin's outreach and community service in the Washington area and beyond is vast and wide-ranging. Mr. Slatkin established the National Conducting Institute, from which more than 50 young conductors have graduated, in order to create a continuing tradition of strong musicianship and community service among American orchestra music directors.

He also has worked with young conductors around the country in other programs, including the Aspen Music Festival and School. Several years ago, when funding was cut for the DC Youth Orchestra, Mr. Slatkin helped raise money so that 130 children could continue to participate in the program, and he has continued his involvement with the DC Youth Orchestra.

For more information on Leonard Slatkin, please visit [leonardslatkin.com](http://leonardslatkin.com).



## District Activities



Mayor Williams signed into law the District government's new Office of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) Affairs statutory agency.



Mayor Williams settled his bet on the Redskins vs. Seahawks playoff game by treating Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels to lunch at Ben's Chili Bowl on U Street.



Mayor Anthony Williams held his weekly press briefing at the 2006 Washington Auto Show at the Washington Convention Center.

## Community News

- [Mayor Williams Returns Smoking Ban Legislation to Council Unsigned](#)
- [District Ends FY 2005 with \\$1.5 Billion Fund Balance](#)
- [Advocates Join Mayor Williams to Press for Local Forensic Lab](#)
- [Mayor Williams Issues Statement on the Passing of Coretta Scott King](#)

## Upcoming Events

[View All News Releases](#)

2/4	<b>Metropolitan Police Department Career Expo</b> 9 am – 4pm Room A-5 Washington Convention Center (Hall C) 801 Mount Vernon Place, NW
2/4	<b>Summer Recruitment Job Fair</b> 11 am – 3 pm Barry Farm Recreation Center 1230 Summer Road, SE
2/8	<b>Giant Food Job Fair</b> 9 am – 2 pm Franklin Street One-Stop Career Center 1500 Franklin Street, NE
2/10	<b>ARAMARK/RFK Job Fair</b> 10 am – 2 pm Naylor Road One-Stop Career Center 2626 Naylor Rd, SE

